

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RETIRED BIG BEAR LAKE MAYOR NEAL HERTZMANN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS PASSING

HON. JAY OBERNOLTE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor the passing of Neal Hertzmann, a constituent of my district and former Mayor of my hometown of Big Bear Lake, California. Neal was an exceptional and dedicated public servant. He served Big Bear Lake as its mayor from 1994 to 1998 and served Southern California for over twenty years including as a member of the Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power Board, a Councilman for the City of Big Bear Lake, and as Big Bear Lake's representative on the League of California Cities, just to name a few of his roles. In each position, Neal never lost sight of the unique qualities that make each of us proud to call our community home.

In addition to his extensive public service, Neal was an innovative mechanical engineer by trade, and diligently worked on several of the Falcon missiles for Hughes Aircraft, which were among the very first operational guided air-to-air missiles adopted by the United States Air Force. His creative originality and expertise also proved vital in the development and success of the Surveyor program, which consisted of seven unmanned lunar missions launched between May 1966 and January 1968, five of which successfully soft-landed on the lunar surface. The legendary success of the Apollo 11 mission would not have been possible if not for the crucial developments pioneered by great men like Neal.

Throughout his life, Neal sought opportunities to directly engage with neighbors, to meet new people, and to lend a helping hand wherever he could. I am honored to have had the chance to know him and call him my friend, and I can say from firsthand experience how impactful his continuous dedication has been for our community. My prayers are with his family and the City of Big Bear Lake as we mourn the loss of this dedicated public servant.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF LIEUTENANT PETER BLUME, JR.

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise today in recognition of the loss of a champion of his community—Fire Police Lieutenant Peter Blume, Jr., of Vernon, Connecticut. Pete, as he was known, tragically left this world, still active in his service as a first responder, on March 2, 2022, at the age of 53. A guardian to his fellow service members, Lieutenant Pete Blume has served with the Fire Police company for the last six years. He was known for his particularly infectious degree of optimism and was eating to all.

Born to Carolyn Bolk Blume and Peter Blume on December 24, 1968, in South Windsor, Pete was destined to live out his life as a source of energy within eastern Connecticut's communities. Upon graduating from South Windsor High, Pete went on to Eastern Connecticut State University where he achieved a degree in physical education in 1991. A true steward of the community, he devoted the next nearly 20 years of his life to teaching as an elementary school physical education teacher for Ashford and Union, Connecticut. He was deeply passionate toward the growth of our region's youngest generation, engaging with students as a youth program leader, the coach for the Ashford boys' basketball team and even by taking on the title of Chef Blume as a cook for Union's annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser.

Amidst his earlier days in teaching, Pete fostered a relationship with the love of his life, Wendy, who he married in 1996. It was through their relationship that Pete's love for raising children transformed him into quite the family man, with the birth of their two children Allison and Timothy. Together, the family moved to Vernon, Connecticut where the children became an inspiration to Pete, catalyzing an entirely new era of community involvement. It was throughout this new era that Pete grew in his already known love for youth sports, coaching and volunteering for his kids' teams in Vernon Little League, Vernon Soccer and Vernon Basketball.

Pete's involvement with the Town of Vernon did not stop with his coaching the next generation. As we all know, he took an interest in and joined the Vernon Fire Department as a fire police officer, becoming the man responsible for the safety of fellow first responders at the scene of an incident. Pete was the perfect man for the job—he was the kind of person who would give you the shut off his back if you needed it. As such, he was known for bringing an unmatched sense of diligence and care to the role, which he took incredibly seriously. For Pete, the safety of those who displayed similar care toward his own neighbors was paramount. He was most recently recognized for his diligence, becoming a 1st Lieutenant with the Vernon Fire Police company which he again served with for more than six years.

Madam Speaker, we ask firefighters and their families to do an enormously important job across our community, our state, and our nation. Standing by every day of the year at all hours, Pete, Vernon's "gentle giant," has given true example to the dedication that first responders arm themselves with while serving their respective communities. In Pete's case, he was also armed with a heart the size of Vernon. These brave men and women unquestionably deserve the very best we can offer as a small form of gratitude for their sacrifice. While we mourn the void left by Pete's loss, we find consolation in the memory he leaves behind. He is survived by his loving family, namely, his wife Wendy, who is also a teacher in Manchester, his two children Timothy and Allison Blume, his mother Carolyn Blume, his brother, David Blume, and his sister Kristin McCauley. While his family will undoubtedly carry the legwork in extending the reach of his memory, I ask that my colleagues join me in supporting this effort, thanking Pete for a life of service and setting his name and character further into stone.

MEADOW MONDRAGON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Meadow Mondragon for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Meadow Mondragon is a student at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Meadow Mondragon is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Meadow Mondragon for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassador for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PASSING OF DOROTHY L.W. SMITH

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

Mr. VARGAS. Madam Speaker, I rise on International Women's Day to honor the life of Ms. Dorothy L.W. Smith, a dedicated educator and San Diego community leader who passed at the age of 82 on February 16th. Ms. Smith was a native of Capleville, Tennessee. She attended the Historically Black College, Philander Smith College, and later received her Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Southern California.

In 1969 Ms. Smith and her husband Carl moved to California where she began her career as a teacher. After moving to California, she taught at Long Beach City College, Grossmont Community College, and later San Diego City College, where she was a professor for 24 years. While teaching at San Diego City College she designed various courses, including one entitled "Black Women in Literature and the Media." This course has now been taught in the San Diego Community College District for more than 45 years. She also lectured at San Diego State University, where she taught courses in teacher education, rhetoric, and writing. She also lectured at San Diego State University where she taught courses in teacher education, rhetoric, and writing.

In 1981, she was elected to serve on the board of the San Diego Unified School District, becoming the first African American woman to be elected to the board. She served on the school board for eight years and twice was the President of the board. In March of 2019, she was recognized and elected to the San Diego Women's Hall of Fame in the Trailblazer category. Today, we celebrate her life and her commitment as an educator and mentor to future teachers.